

# **EFFECT OF ACCELERATED LEARNING ON STUDENTS' READING SKILL IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines effect of Accelerated Learning on Students' Reading Skill in English Language. The objectives of the study include: i). effect of Accelerated Learning on students' Reading Comprehension and ii). Effect of Accelerated Learning on students' vocabulary. Two hypotheses were tested. Junior Secondary School Students one (JSS I) of a selected public schools were the target group of this study. Eighty (80) students in JSS I were selected to constitute the sample size using random sampling technique. Forty (40) control and forty (40) experimental groups were formed to measure the effect of Accelerated Learning. Pretest and posttest were applied to the groups. The data collected were analysed using independent t-test. The findings of the study revealed that Accelerated Learning is very much effective in improving students' reading comprehension; students taught using Accelerated Learning techniques performed better than those taught conventionally in vocabulary retention. Thus, it is recommended that teachers should use Accelerated Learning to improve students' reading comprehension during class sessions and school authorities should encourage teachers to employ Accelerated Learning not only in teaching vocabulary but other language aspects.

**Keywords:** Accelerated Learning, Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary development.

## **Introduction**

The teaching and learning of English language has received a wide recognition and attentions all over the world due to the positions it occupies in the globalization era. The stand of English in business, politics, education and general social context cannot be overemphasized.

Over the years, scholars of English instructors made several attempts to come up with best strategy of language instructions in a simplest way. This noble intentions led to the proliferation of different approaches, methods and techniques of the language instructions; ranging from direct method, audio-visual

method, to grammar translation. However, Accelerated Learning' (or Brain Friendly Learning) is considered to be unique in the history of innovative language teaching because of its user friendly methods of imparting skills to the learners. Ever since it was ushered in by Dr. Georgi Lozanov with a humble beginning of teaching English language to 60 and odd students deploying a variety of non-traditional techniques (e.g. use of visual and auditory methods), referred to in the field, as 'suggestopedia', it has grown in stature, value and volume. The major objective of Dr. Lozanov was to use the method of 'suggestopedia' to enable learners to learn faster, in a holistic manner by using both

the hemispheres of the brain and he did this by employing a 'multi-sensory brain-compatible teaching and learning methodology which was later called Accelerated Learning. Over the years, a great many researchers and professionals who were engaged in different spectrum in the educational training, medicine and psychology disciplines further developed and expanded on the idea of Georgi Lozanov. Today, AL has been considered one of the best techniques of teaching (Lozanov, 2005).

Accelerated Learning is a multi dimensional approach to learning that provides an atmosphere where participants are able to absorb and retain information in multisensory and natural ways. It is based on the latest brain research, it incorporates techniques that engage many parts of the brain, maximizing the natural way people learn. The approach focuses on involving the whole learner including the emotional, intellectual and physical. The term now associated to many methods in education that work to accelerate learning. The term 'accelerated learning' is a very broad term and encompasses many different techniques, methodologies and approaches to teaching and learning. Some methods which would generally be considered to fall under the title of accelerated learning would be: mind maps, Brain Gym or Edu-Kinesthetics, concert texts, reading to music, multiple intelligences theory, various memory techniques, the use of music to influence the emotional and mental state of learners, state setting in a broader sense, the use of songs to aid learning, pattern spotting, the implementation of chunking, suggestopedia, Neuro-linguistic programming, the use of drama, suspension of disbelief etc (Brysbaert M, Stevens M, Mander P and Keuleers E, 2016). The term accelerated learning (AL) has been used over the last 30 years or so to describe how brain

research has been applied to learning (Nicolson, 2006).

Reading skill is very important for the general and academic purposes, it is so important that the success in the academic achievement highly depended on it. Thus knowing the techniques and strategies which help the students improve their reading skill is an essential part of any language programme (Hojarat, 2011). Reading is the complex cognitive process of decoding symbols to derive meaning. It is a form of language processing. Success in this process is measured as reading comprehension. Reading is a means for language acquisition, communication, and sharing information and ideas. The symbols are typically visual (written or printed) but may be tactile (Braille). Like all languages, it is a complex interaction between text and reader, shaped by prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and the language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement. Reading requires creativity and critical analysis (Cornelissen, et al, 2009).

*Similarly*, a vocabulary is a set of familiar words within a person's language. A vocabulary, usually developed with age, serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Acquiring an extensive vocabulary is one of the largest challenges in learning a second language. According to (Hojarat, 2011) "Vocabulary learning is dominant in language acquisition, whether the language is a second or a foreign language, and crucial to the learners" overall language acquisition. One of the fundamental reasons for this notion is that a lot of unknown words, which learners encounter while reading could cause difficulties in processing the text. Students and teachers alike know that many of the reading comprehension breakdowns experienced

by students involve word recognition and lexical access”.

Vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. Underscoring the importance of vocabulary acquisition, Schmitt (2000) emphasizes that “lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language”. Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use and, conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge. The importance of vocabulary is demonstrated daily in and out the school. In classroom, the achieving students possess the most sufficient vocabulary.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Students from all levels, right from middle basic, are expected to have reading fluency in English language. This is because the success of an individual in virtually all subjects is heavily attached to his/her success in reading. Many strategies are, on daily basis, mapped out to reduce the reading difficulties among second language learners yet the increasing rate of students’ poor reading in public schools are at alarming rate. Many factors are believed to contributed negatively to this matter especially home background, neighbourhood and school environment. However, this study seeks to examine the effect of Accelerated Learning on Students’ Reading Skill in English language.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are to determine:

- a. Effect of Accelerated Learning on Students’ Reading Comprehension in English language.

- b. Effect of Accelerated Learning on Students’ Vocabulary development in English language

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: Accelerated Learning does not influence students’ Reading Comprehension in English Language
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no effect of Accelerated Learning on Students’ Vocabulary in English Language

### **Scope and Limitation**

The study examined effect of Accelerated Learning on Students’ Reading Skill in English Language. The study focused on students reading comprehension and vocabulary retention in junior secondary schools one (JSS I) of 2018/2019 academic session of two selected public schools. The study was delimited to two schools because of the financial cost required by the study and timeframe. Pretest and posttest were applied to both the treatment group as well as the control group. The sessions lasted for 12 consecutive weeks.

### **Methodology**

Quasi-experimental design was employed to examine the effect of AL on students’ Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary retention. The population for the study involved JSS I students of 2018/2019 academic session in two selected public schools. Eighty (80) students were randomly selected to participate in the activities. Pre-Posttest were used to examine the effect of the AL on students reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. The instrument termed ‘Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Test (RECOVOTE)’ was used to examine the reading skill of the students. Independent t-test was used to analyse the data collected.

## Results

The data collected were analyzed using independent t-test and the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance as in the below tables:

**Table 1: Independent T-test on effect of AL on students' reading comprehension**

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variance		T-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Df
<b>Pretest Result on Reading</b>	Equal Variances Assumed	4.044	0.47	-.224	88
	Equal Variance not Assumed			-.224	82.968
<b>Posttest Result on Reading</b>	Equal Variances Assumed	20.886	0.000	9.631	88
	Equal Variance not Assumed				66.518

The result in the reading skill for the pretest in the table above, shows that there is no significant difference on their performance both experimental group and control at significant P-value ( $P > 0.05$ ). On the contrary, the result in the posttest

indicates that the experimental group performed better than control group at significant P-value ( $P < 0.05$ ). However, this exhibits that there is great significance effect of AL on the students reading comprehension.

**Table 2: Independent T-test on effect of AL on students' Vocabulary Retention**

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variance		T-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	T	Df
<b>Pretest Result on Vocabulary</b>	Equal Variances Assumed	3.555	0.063	-2.094	88
	Equal Variance not Assumed			-2.924	84.745
<b>Posttest Result on Vocabulary</b>	Equal Variances Assumed	18.237	0.000	9.615	88
	Equal Variance not Assumed			9.615	70.349

The result in the vocabulary retention for the pretest in the table above shows that there is no significant difference of AL on the performance of both experimental group and control at significant P-value ( $P > 0.05$ ). However, the result in the posttest showed that the experimental group performed better than control group at significant P-value ( $P < 0.05$ ).

## Conclusion

The use of Accelerated Learning has significant effect on Secondary School students' reading comprehension. The result showed that when Accelerated

Learning techniques are employed students tend to learn faster in reading fluency as well as reading comprehension due to the optimum environment created by the approach as well as the nature of the activities involved in the strategy of teaching English language in Accelerated Learning. Furthermore, the finding also revealed that students who taught using Accelerated Learning perform better than those taught in common traditional methods in terms of vocabulary retention as well as relating the story in the passages to the real life. Students taught in Accelerated Learning supported

environment showed greater interest in the lessons thereby became more attentive and more practical when acquired new words in the passages taught in their classrooms. This might not be unconnected to the fact AL ensures winning of students' trust and relaxing their anxiety before the commencement of the lessons. Therefore, it is evident that use of Accelerated Learning has significant effect on students' reading ability in English language.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that English language teachers should employ Accelerated Learning Techniques in teaching reading comprehension and vocabulary development to ESL learners. School authorities should encourage teachers to deploy principles of AL during vocabulary retention activities.

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